

**Conservation Commission Minutes
Tuesday, September 18, 2012
Town Hall Meeting Room, Old Town Rd.
5:30pm**

Present: Members: Chair Ned Phillips Jr., Vice Chair Fred Leeder, Marea Mott, Leslie Slate, David Roosa, Donald Littlefield and John Hopf. Also present was Terri Chmiel, Administrative Assistant for the recording of the minutes.

Call to Order

Chair Mr. Phillips, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:34p.m.

Approval of minutes for August 7, 2012 and August 14, 2012

Mr. Littlefield made a motion seconded Mr. Slate to approve the minutes of August 7, 2012 and August 14, 2012 as presented.

7 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Hopf, Slate, Littlefield, Mott and Roosa) 0 Nays

Update on the Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines

Mr. Phillips, Jr. discussed the Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines as a work in progress and welcomed all public input. Mr. Phillips stated he contacted the Rhode Island Tree Council and DEM Forestry for input; as well as, the Town of Warren. The Town of Warren is forwarding a copy of their tree ordinance.

David Milner representing the Block Island Power Company (BIPCO) discussed working with Mr. Phillips and the Commission on abiding by the guidelines that will be put into place. He further explained that in the past BIPCO worked with a mainland company for tree trimming. BIPCO took the project upon themselves when it became to expense for the company to come out to the island. Mr. Milner stated that the BIPCO will focus on tree trimming along Corn Neck Road over the next several months.

John and Rosemary Ives also presented. Mr. Ives commented that the Newport Ordinance was comprehensive and some of the content did not apply to Block Island. His suggestions included:

- List the duties of the Tree Warden.
- Focus on the real priorities of the Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines and how to implement.
- Definition of a hazardous tree.
- Field test/road side evaluation to determine if conflicts will arise on how the ordinance will be applied.

Bill Connelly asked the Commission how the Tree Warden was paid. Mr. Phillips answered the position is unpaid and further acknowledged the Town Council appoints the position on an annual basis as mandate by the state.

Bruce Montgomery suggested the ordinance should be reconstructed to the following format:

- Tree warden
- Duties of tree commission
- Definitions
- Emergency

The Commission will hold a work session on October 2, 2012 at 5:30pm to review the Warren Tree Ordinance and implement suggestions.

Discussion of the recent sewer spill

Mr. Leeder and Mr. Slate attended the New Shoreham Sewer Commission meeting that was held on September 17, 2012. Mr. Leeder presented a list of questions from the Town Council and the answers from the Sewer Commission. The Sewer Commission will take under advisement comments and suggestions; however, the Sewer Commission determined the emergency contact list needs to be expanded. Mr. Leeder noted the Sewer Commission did not address the lag time from dispatch receiving a call and response time to the scene.

Old Business

Beach Access

No action was taken.

Waterless Urinals

Mr. Leeder informed the board that he will speak to First Warden Kim Gaffett on the waterless urinals.

Beach Fire Permits

Matt Moran, spoke on behalf of the Town. He thanked the Commission for inviting him to their meeting. He explained that discussion ensued several years ago to charge for a fire permit. He discussed some problems that could arise if permits are issued and fees collected:

- If the winds are particular strong on a given day the fire chief will not allow beach fires.
- A person may pull a fire permit as a good will gesture and then change their mind.
- A fire may be built earlier in the evening and a different group will use the same pit later thus making it difficult to determine which party left trash behind.

Mr. Moran stated he has not seen as much trash in recent years and explained the system seems to be working. Mr. Moran thanked the Commission for their work on putting up snow fencing.

Adjourn

Dave and Joan Olson asked the Commissioner's if they would consider addressing view sheds. This item will be placed on next month's agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10p.m. in a motion by Mr. Hopf and seconded by Mr. Phillips.

7 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Hopf, Slate, Littlefield, Mott and Roosa) 0 Nays

Respectfully submitted

Terri L. Chmiel

Minutes approved: December 11, 2012